1	IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
2	FOR THE DISTRICT OF RHODE ISLAND
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5	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA *
6	* * APRIL 28, 2015
7	* 10:00 A.M. JOHN J. FALL *
8	* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * PROVIDENCE, RI
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10	BEFORE THE HONORABLE JOHN J. McCONNELL, JR.,
11	DISTRICT JUDGE
12 13	(Sentencing)
14	APPEARANCES:
15	FOR THE GOVERNMENT: JOHN N. KANE, ESQ.
16	JEFFREY BRIAN BENDER, ESQ. U.S. Department of Justice
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28 APRIL 2015 -- 10:00 A.M.

THE COURT: Good morning, everyone. We're here this morning for sentencing in the case of the United States versus John J. Fall, Criminal Action Number 13-135.

Would counsel identify themselves for the record, please.

MR. KANE: Good morning, your Honor. John Kane for the United States. With me at counsels' table is Mr. Bender, Jeff Bender, with the Department of Justice for the Government as well.

THE COURT: Good morning. Welcome back, folks.

MR. KANE: Thank you.

MR. BENDER: Good morning.

MR. FITZGERALD: Kevin Fitzgerald for Mr. Fall.

THE COURT: Good morning, Mr. Fitzgerald.

MR. FITZGERALD: Good morning, your Honor.

THE COURT: I have received a copy of the -- let the record reflect that the Defendant is in the courtroom.

I've received a copy of the presentence report, the Government's sentencing memorandum, an objection to the presentence report, which we'll deal with in due order, and various filings by the Defendant that are on the docket.

The presentence report calculates the advisory sentencing guidelines as follows. Mr. Fitzgerald, I will hear your objections as we go through it. For the three counts -- is it three counts?

THE DEFENDANT: Sir, for the record, I require to augment my allocution already on the record. That's my right.

THE COURT: For the four -- Mr. Fall, if you wish to be heard, you need to sit at defense table by a microphone.

THE DEFENDANT: As you know, sir, I'm neither the Defendant nor the accuser.

THE COURT: The four counts that Mr. Fall was found guilty of carry with it a base offense level of 18. The tax loss has been calculated to be between 200 and 400 thousand dollars, which is why the base offense level of 18 applies.

In addition, the Probation Department has added two points under Sentencing Guideline 2T1.1(b)(2) because the Defendant used multiple methods in an attempt to conceal his criminal activity by setting up multiple business entities and bank accounts across the country and by using false names. That carries with it a two-point addition.

In addition, the Probation Department has

calculated an adjustment for obstruction of justice. Their recommendation is that the Defendant willfully obstructed or impeded or attempted to obstruct or impede the administration of justice with respect to the investigation, prosecution or sentencing in the instant offense and that the obstructive conduct related to the Defendant's offense of conviction and any other relevant conduct or a closely-related offense; and, therefore, two points were added.

The Defendant, through its objection to the presentence report, objects to that two-point enhancement, which I'll hear in one second.

The adjusted offense level comes to 22.

Mr. Fall has no criminal history points and, therefore, is a Category I. So for an offense level of 22 with a criminal history of I, the recommended period of incarceration is 41 to 51 months.

Mr. Kane, any objection to the presentence report or the calculation of the guideline range by the Government?

MR. KANE: No objection from the Government.

THE COURT: Mr. Fitzgerald, you have filed an objection concerning the offense conduct that was listed as well as the two-point enhancement for obstruction of justice. I'll hear you on that.

MR. FITZGERALD: Your Honor, the -- would you like me to go to the middle?

THE COURT: I think it's better for the stenographer if you would.

THE DEFENDANT: Sir, for the record, I require to augment my allocution already on the record. I'm here by special visitation under threat --

(Defendant confers with counsel.)

THE COURT: Mr. Fitzgerald.

MR. FITZGERALD: Your Honor, getting to the obstruction of justice enhancement, I'd like the Court to keep in mind the timing of my objection filing and then when the sentencing memorandum came from the Government, okay, because it came afterwards, your Honor.

The presentence report says that the obstruction of justice enhancement is applied per the offense conduct, which just comes from the Government. All right. It's not the Government's decision. It's the Court's decision whether there's been obstruction of justice or not.

So when probation puts in there that per the Government Mr. Fall committed perjury and, therefore, two points are applied, we've got the cart before the horse.

THE COURT: Well, let me do this. Let me ask you to -- do you want to be heard on the offense conduct section that's in the presentence report?

Let's put aside the obstruction of justice.

MR. FITZGERALD: Yes.

THE COURT: Why don't you be heard on that.

MR. FITZGERALD: Your Honor, there is no --

THE COURT: Why don't I let you be heard on that.

MR. FITZGERALD: Thank you. There's no rule, there's no regulation that says there is an offense conduct section in the PSR. It's something we do, generally do. I think the intent is that it helps the Court understand the whole case and it helps the Court figure out what the sentence ought to be.

Now, if you combine that with the fact that the vast overwhelming majority of cases are pleas and everybody pleas to an agreed-upon set of facts, the offense conduct section is usually not an issue. Most of the time everybody agrees what the ingredients are, what the facts are in the offense conduct.

When we have a trial, it changes, okay, because at a trial we do have a decision that's made at the end of the trial, and it's whether somebody is guilty or not guilty of the charges, and the jury makes that

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decision. And after trial, that's the only fact that's decided, that is, the offense conduct, did somebody commit that crime or did they not. That's it. Okay. Everything else is not agreed upon by the parties. Okay. So in this instance, the Government put a whole lot of -- well, they put their theory, what they believe the facts of the case are in there. objection is, that's not the place for it. And after I filed that, we got the sentencing memorandum from the Government last week, and all those same facts are in the sentencing memorandum, and that's the place it should be. That's the appropriate place. THE COURT: Let me hear from Mr. Kane on just that issue. MR. FITZGERALD: One other thing, your Honor? Sure. Of course. THE COURT: MR. FITZGERALD: When those facts are included in the PSR --THE COURT: It has repercussions. MR. FITZGERALD: -- it has repercussions, and it follows the Defendant around. THE COURT: I understand.

MR. FITZGERALD: Thank you, your Honor.

THE COURT: Mr. Kane.

MR. KANE: Your Honor, I think it's standard practice not only in this district but other districts, the Probation Department does an investigation, presentence investigation, and they seek the views of the facts from Government counsel. That's what was done here.

The Defendant presumably had an opportunity to put their version of the facts. Clearly we had a jury verdict that basically affirmed in our view or the evidence affirmed virtually all of the facts in the PSR, and it was up to the defense counsel to lay out specific objections as to each paragraph or statement of fact in the PSR.

Defense counsel didn't do that. Defense counsel did object to general characterizations, and I think he's got a fair point on that. For example, I think he cites paragraph 13 in which the characterization that he embarked on a decade-long campaign perhaps is more argument than statement of fact. And if the Court wishes to strike that part of the PSR, we would not object.

But with respect to the other statements of fact in the PSR, they are, in fact, statements of fact.

They are consistent with the evidence at trial, and the case was proven beyond a reasonable doubt.

So in light of the fact that the Defendant didn't specifically object to the other statements of fact, we think the Court can make the findings set forth in the PSR short of the characterization that he highlights.

THE COURT: Here's what I'm going to do. I am going to sustain the Defendant's objection to the offense conduct. We have tried in this district under Chief Justice Smith to come to some better understanding of how we come to offense conduct paragraphs that are contained in the PSR where we have worked through trying to deal with this very issue where facts may be contested in certain instances and the fact that the PSR lives with the person at least during their custody, if not beyond.

And I do find that there are various, let's call them, extra adjectives and adverbs in here that perhaps carry with it matters that shouldn't necessarily go along.

So toward that end, I'm going to ask the Probation Department, instruct the Probation Department to redo the offense conduct contained in the PSR such that just the facts of what Mr. Fall was convicted of before this jury are contained in there.

I will state for the record and I found that in

no way, shape or form is this Court considered or does it consider what is currently contained in the offense conduct as the offense conduct in the PSR and is proceeding with the sentencing pursuant to the fact that I sat through this trial, and I will proceed with it accordingly.

So on the issue of the offense conduct, I will sustain the objection. The Probation Department will issue a new offense conduct, he'll send it to both sides, both sides will have time to object to the new offense conduct, and if there's an objection, I'll rule on it. If there isn't, then we'll insert it into a revised PSR.

Mr. Fitzgerald, the obstruction of justice objection.

MR. FITZGERALD: Your Honor, one of the bases in the PSR for that enhancement was the Government declaring that Mr. Fall committed perjury.

THE COURT: Put aside the perjury part because there's a lot in this case, at least on my side, that goes beyond needing to find perjury in order to apply the obstruction of justice.

MR. FITZGERALD: Your Honor, beyond the perjury, I think that's up to the Court to decide whether or not that obstruction of justice applies or doesn't apply.

So I'd leave that to the Court to decide. As you said, you listened to the trial. That's your decision.

THE COURT: Mr. Kane, do you want to be heard any further on it?

MR. KANE: No, your Honor, but we do remind the Court that, as set forth in our sentencing brief, other circuits have addressed -- circuits, Tenth Circuit I think, the Ninth Circuit, some District Courts, in which they found the obstruction enhancement does apply based on those two additional grounds beyond perjury.

We think perjury is well-supported. We laid it out in our brief; but in addition, the retaliatory lawsuits, the frivolous paper, all that we think supports the obstruction enhancement.

THE COURT: I'm going to overrule the

Defendant's objection to the obstruction of justice
enhancement and apply it in this instance without
making any determination on whether perjury occurred or
not. There's others that will make that determination.

The guideline enhancement is for willfully obstructing or impeding the administration of justice with respect to the investigation, the prosecution or the sentencing.

There are two particular categories of cases that the Court finds makes the obstruction of justice

enhancement appropriate. One was the filing of false and harassing documents during the course of the judicial proceedings, including allegations and filings that were made that this Court deems to have been fraudulent, as well as charges that were made and asserted against both the prosecutors and court personnel in filings with the court.

It's one thing to defend yourself or to assert personal or political beliefs. It's another thing to make false accusations in court filings about personnel and the prosecutors in this case. That's the first reason.

The second stems a little from that but involves the filing of two civil lawsuits against some or all of the prosecutors in this case, both in State and Federal Court. The Court specifically finds that those filings were an attempt to obstruct the investigation and the prosecution of this case.

There is absolutely no doubt in this Court's mind that Mr. Fall's actions in this matter during the investigation and prosecution represented an attempt by him to obstruct justice such that the enhancement applies.

So the Court finds that the guideline range of 22 with the criminal history category of I is

appropriate carrying with it a recommended period of incarceration of 41 to 51 months, and I'll hear from the Government on its sentencing recommendation.

MR. KANE: Thank you, your Honor. Section 3553(a), as the Court knows, requires the Court to consider a number of factors before imposing sentence.

In addition to the guidelines which themselves account to a large extent for 3553(a) factors, the Court must consider the nature and circumstances of the offense; the history and characteristics of the Defendant; the need for deterrence, which is especially important in tax cases, both specific and general; and the need to avoid unwarranted sentencing disparities, to essentially be fair across the board to similarly situated Defendants.

But there's another factor that 3553(a) mentions, a factor that I think ties all the other factors together in this case, a factor that I think would jump out to anybody who came to this case and considered it for the first time afresh, and that is the need to promote respect for the law. I think that consideration ties it all together, your Honor.

Indeed, at its core, I think this case really is about the Defendant's willful, arrogant and continuing and unyielding contempt for the rule of law at least

with respect to taxes.

From his decision to stop paying taxes back in 1999 all the way through to the present, including the obstructions of this Court, this case cries out for a sentence that promotes respect of the law and tells this Defendant and others that would engage in the conduct that he engaged in that they're going to pay a heavy price.

Indeed, the need to promote respect for the law can be seen first in the nature and circumstances of the offense, including the long chronology over which he committed these offenses.

As of April 1999, he decided he wasn't going to pay taxes anymore. That was the deadline for his 1998 tax return. He was done paying taxes.

As early as 1999, he's using warehouse accounts, he's setting up nominees. Long before the IRS contacted him, long before the IRS audited him, long before the IRS allegedly wronged him in some way, he decided he was done. He stopped filing. He continued to stop filing all the way to the present.

Not only did he do that, he engaged in an elaborate scheme to conceal. As we proved at trial and as we argued in our brief, multiple layers of concealment, sophisticated concealment. As we noted in

our briefs, virtually every tax fraud tool available he tried to use.

Sixteen shell companies to hide his financial affairs; multiple bank accounts, I think 18 bank accounts literally from coast to coast; commingled bank accounts; nominee bank accounts; transferring monies between those accounts; warehouse accounts; multiple warehouse accounts; nine fake names and aliases to lend further concealment; extensive use of cash; the use of nominee business addresses, all of it to ensure what he said in Exhibit 71-F offered at trial, to ensure that he would never pay taxes again.

In spite of all these efforts, the IRS caught up with him as early as 2002. Did he get right with the law? Did he comply with the law? Did he respect the law? He did not, your Honor.

To the contrary, he tried to obstruct the audit as to his taxes. He filed frivolous paper with the IRS hoping that maybe the agents would go work an easier case because that's what they do, harass and intimidate, filing fictitious financial claims against those agents.

And he was warned repeatedly as early as 2002 that what he was doing was wrong, that what he was doing could lead to his prosecution, that what he was

doing could land him in prison as early as 2002.

He didn't heed that advice. He ignored it and pressed full steam ahead; but as bad as that is as to his own taxes, he also encouraged others to break the law starting with his wife.

As charged, and as we proved at trial, he encouraged his wife to file false corporate returns.

2006 and 2007 were charged. We showed at trial that it actually went back as far as 2003 creating false advertising expenses, false equipment expenses.

He caused her to file false personal returns which we showed at trial, at least the 2005 return, in which some of those same false deductions are appearing on her personal returns, which shows you that he was behind it all from the very beginning.

She, too, was caught. She was caught in 2008. The IRS audited her. Did he get right with the law? Did he encourage her to comply with the law, to respect the law? To the contrary. He encouraged her to break the law, to not show up at the summons.

He told her accountant, Bill Harrigan, if you recall his testimony, that he shouldn't cooperate with the IRS, that he should use his technology papering the IRS hoping that they would go away.

He filed frivolous papers with Ken Cournoyer

trying to harass and intimidate, again making fictitious financial claims, all in an effort to show disrespect for the law and to obstruct the IRS. They were not good faith inquiries. They were designed to obstruct.

But it didn't stop there. 2010 he files false papers with the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts in which he denied any interest in NERH, which the evidence at trial showed he created using his aliases. I think Thomas Brown was the one he used to create that entity. He denied ownership and control of the funds in the U.S. District Court.

And it didn't stop there. After Indictment, as the Court has now found, he tried to obstruct the prosecution of this matter through all that he did, all his paper; but he also committed perjury, multiple falsehoods during his testimony, manipulation and deception throughout. Claiming that Managed Skills was real. It wasn't. Claiming he didn't create Managed Skills. The overwhelming evidence showed that he did. Denying any interest in NERH, that he created that. The overwhelming evidence showed that he did. Denied that he knew anything about the cash coming into Comfort Dental. The evidence showed that he did. And we lay out other perjuries in our brief.

In addition to the nature and circumstances of the offense, the history and characteristics of the Defendant, as we point out in our brief, again, utter disrespect for the law. Not only did he encourage his wife to violate the tax laws, he encouraged others.

Research found on his computer disks shows he was setting up a business to promote tax fraud. It's not clear whether he was successful at it, but we do know at least two witnesses who have come forward whose statements we provided in our brief who outline how Mr. Fall encouraged them to break the law on taxes.

And the documents found on his disks show research and him setting up a business to promote tax fraud.

The divorce court order, I think that's part of the mix at this point, another area outside of taxes where he showed contempt for the law, contempt for Judge McCann, refused to recognize the Court.

There were witness statements we provided in our briefs in which he did the same or similar kinds of things that he's done here, contempt for the law, disrespect for the law.

The need for deterrence, it's especially important in tax cases, your Honor, because of the relatively few prosecutions, the nature of our

collection system. The Sentencing Commission as an introduction to the guidelines points out how important deterrence is, general deterrence.

Honest taxpayers need to know that when people like John Fall do what they do, they're going to pay a heavy price.

We would ask the Court to think about the honest taxpayers in this country who just went through another filing season. A lot of them struggle to make ends meet. A lot of them struggle to come up with a check to write to the Treasury, but they do it, they do it, more often than not because of respect for the law and that they know there's probably a heavy price to pay if they're tempted to do otherwise.

John Fall over 10 years scoffed at that idea, made a mockery of that. What he did was an affront to those taxpayers. We'd ask the Court to send a message to those honest taxpayers that their honesty does matter.

And in this case specific deterrence is also an issue, and that's not always an issue in tax cases, your Honor. In some cases, there's some degree of remorse. In perhaps many cases, the offender never commits the offense again.

But this Defendant, although he stands before

this Court for the first time for criminal sentencing, he's essentially a recidivist when you take a look at what he did during all those audits given all the warnings that he was given. He just refused to comply with the law. He refused to show respect for the law.

Finally, on sentencing disparities, we pointed out in our brief there were some other tax evasion sentencings in this district before Judge Lisi. I think the Bruce Lapierre and the Al Martin case in which they both received 51 months is an appropriate analogy.

There really is no individual circumstances here that should mitigate from that sentence. They were unrepentant tax defiers. They, too, I think, cheated on their taxes for more than a decade. So in order to avoid --

THE COURT: Mr. Kane, tell me what you know about Eva Melissa Sugar, who is listed in the PSR as a related prosecution who got 18 months. I remember the name during the trial, but I couldn't place what her role was or what her offense was.

MR. KANE: I think she pled to conspiracy, if I'm not mistaken, and she was essentially a promoter out in Colorado in which she helped people like John Fall set up shell companies, bank accounts.

I don't know what the tax loss was. She pled guilty. She took responsibility for her action. She showed remorse before trial. She didn't perjure herself. She didn't obstruct the Court.

So there are a lot of, I think, distinguishing circumstances, although she did I think receive an 18-month sentence.

So, your Honor, I think taking all of those factors into account, we respectfully suggest that a guideline sentence is appropriate here, and we respectfully recommend that the high end is appropriate given his obstruction of justice here, and we recommend a 51-month term of imprisonment and three years of supervised release.

We mention in our brief two special conditions. One condition is typical that we ask for, and that is that he cooperate, when he's released, with the IRS to disclose his financial affairs and pay all back taxes that he may owe, which is going to be less than the \$392,000 tax loss because part of that is Carmen's amount that she paid back.

And the second factor is unique to this case, and that is we think there should be an order precluding him from filing the kind of false, frivolous papers that the Court has now found to be obstructive

to deter him from further corroding the Court with these kinds of filings, and that should be a special condition. Thank you.

THE COURT: Thank you, Mr. Kane.

Mr. Fitzgerald.

MR. FITZGERALD: Your Honor, I'm going to try to maintain a direct route through my sentencing argument here, but I feel like I might be skipping around a bit.

It seems to me after listening to the argument and reading the Government's sentencing memo, the biggest reason the Government wants the 51-month sentence, aside from the guidelines, that's what the guidelines say, is that they think that Mr. Fall is arrogant.

Your Honor, I know arrogance. Okay. I know arrogance. Mr. Thompson's here in the courtroom. He understands that I know arrogance because he has to work with me on a daily basis.

THE COURT: Should we put him on the stand?

MR. FITZGERALD: I think he would confirm what
I'm saying, but at least I can admit that I'm arrogant.
Okay. The Government's case against Mr. Fall was
arrogant. Okay. Their request to you for a sentence
is arrogant. And I'm not just picking on --

THE COURT: Let's assume it's arrogant. Is it

justifiably arrogant, if it even were arrogant?

MR. FITZGERALD: No, it's not justifiably arrogant. And, unfortunately, it's Mr. Kane and Mr. Bender here today, but this is not something that's just on them. It's something that appears in Government sentencings and Government cases all the time.

Your Honor, if you remember back to the case against Mr. Fall, we heard about millions and millions of dollars going through all these different bank accounts, all of these warehouse accounts, all right, Agent Pleshaw, his slides about all these millions of dollars.

And in the PSR we have these related cases, right, which I found curious that they're included in the PSR. I didn't object to it. It's the first time I've seen cases attached to a PSR who were not Co-Defendants and were from other jurisdictions. I don't know.

The relation is not that they conspired with Mr. Fall, even though you'll see they were all convicted of conspiracies. The relationship was that Mr. Fall's money, according to the Government, went through those people; but it's added in there to make Mr. Fall look like a bigger criminal than he actually

is.

The millions of dollars that flow through these warehouse accounts was not money that he was in control of. They come here today and they say the loss amount is 390 something thousand dollars, that's all, but we've put forth this arrogant argument that Mr. Fall is a far bigger criminal than he is and that he's arrogant and, therefore, give him a top-of-the-guideline sentence. Okay.

The sentencing guidelines, Judge -- perhaps this is where I'm going to be arrogant now. The sentencing guidelines are simply not credible. They lack credibility. The Government quoted the introduction to the tax guideline, okay, in their sentencing memo, and on page -- I'm sorry. I do have the actual page number.

They quoted the introduction to the tax guideline, and I'll just read the portion that I think makes most -- is most important for this.

In the middle of that paragraph it says -- these are the introductory comments to, excuse me, Part T of the offense conduct in the sentencing guidelines. In the middle of that commentary paragraph it says, "Because of the limited number of criminal tax prosecutions relative to the estimated incidence of

such violations, deterring others from violating the tax laws is a primary consideration underlying these guidelines." Okay.

So what that tells me is that the Sentencing Commission thought that deterrence, deterrence was the main force in coming up with these sentencing guidelines.

Right underneath it says this was written in 1987, so almost 30 years ago, and we're still fighting the same battle.

So one of the things that Congress told the Commission to do was to write guidelines and watch the guidelines and study the impact of the guidelines to determine if they have the effect they're intended to have, and clearly they're not because we still have the same types of cases.

Okay. Mr. Kane will tell you, this is the same type of case. We want to send out a message to these people. Okay. Well, the sentencing guidelines that the Government has latched themselves onto is not sending that message.

Now, the tax table that's attached to or referred to under the tax guidelines has changed since 1987. And in 1987, Mr. Fall would have been looking at a guideline range four levels lower than he is now. So

cases coming.

are we to believe that the answer to deterrence is more jail? I don't think so because we still have these

And, actually, if you adjust for inflation and economics, maybe there's really no difference. Maybe he's actually looking at a lower sentence now than he would have been then or vice versa. I'm not sure.

But the guidelines themselves simply lack credibility. That number, 41 to 51, that the Court's decided on for the guideline range is pulled out of thin air. It's just pulled out of thin air.

Prior to the sentencing guidelines, 38 percent of all cases in Federal Court, all people, Defendants sentenced in Federal Court got probation. Thirty-eight percent. Since the guidelines as we know, even post-Booker, you know, your Honor, far less than 38 percent.

But one of the other things that Congress told the Commission to do was to account for first-time offenders, nonviolent crimes and -- I'm sorry, in 18 U.S.C. 994 Congress directed the Commission to reflect the general appropriateness of imposing a sentence other than imprisonment in cases in which the Defendant is a first-time offender who has not been convicted of a crime of violence or otherwise serious

offense.

Now, we can have a debate about whether this is a serious offense or not, but it's certainly not a crime of violence. Mr. Fall's not a danger to the community.

And I would say it's not a serious offense looking at the penalties that can be applied here. The maximum penalty is five years in prison. Simple possession of a firearm carries up to 10 years. Possession of small amounts of cocaine and crack cocaine carry up to 20 years. Bank fraud carries up to 30 years.

So there's a -- I would say looking at everything, this is not the serious offense, okay, that the Government thinks it is. And Mr. Fall is the person that the Congress -- is the type of person that Congress was talking about when telling the Commission to account for, in the guidelines, the appropriateness of probation for a first-time offender.

And, your Honor, although the Government has latched onto the guidelines and asked to be given the top end of the guideline and mostly because they want to promote respect for the law and a deterrent effect and all, they really haven't demonstrated that that sentence will have any deterrent effect. They haven't

shown you that the sentencing guidelines have ever had any deterrent effect in this matter.

Okay. The Government is obviously concerned or upset about Mr. Fall's campaign over time against the IRS. And you remember, Judge, though, he was actually convicted of obstructing. That was one of the charges. Okay. So the acts that were obstructing is one of the things he's been convicted of.

THE COURT: I looked at that because that's what I initially thought. And then I read the guideline, the sentencing manual, and it says that you don't apply -- I wondered whether an obstruction charge like this would negate the addition of the obstruction enhancement, but this isn't one of the provisions that the guideline provides for on obstruction pretty explicitly.

I was surprised by that, but that's -- you know, if we're applying the guidelines, that's sort of how it came down.

MR. FITZGERALD: And they only have the credibility that they have, which is, as I said, none.

THE COURT: Don't throw it.

MR. FITZGERALD: I'm not going to throw it. I'm not going to throw it.

But the fact is that some of the obstruction

they're complaining about now and saying it's an aggravating factor is, in fact, the crime he was convicted of. Some of it, not all of it, but some of it. So it's not really an aggravating situation. It is the situation.

If you remember, your Honor, and I think you listened, but if you remember -- I know you listened. I'm sorry. Mr. Fall was upset with the IRS because they disallowed an \$89,000 deduction. Okay.

I've never had a deduction that large. I would be upset, too, if it was disallowed. And he asked for some answers from the IRS, which I think anybody should. They didn't give him a direct response. They gave him a canned response over and over, these form letters over and over. And their excuse is, Well, we're trying to deal with millions and millions of people.

Well, we're still individuals, and he certainly expected an answer particular to his question. They never gave him that. Okay. So he's upset about that. He's got a right to be upset about that.

THE COURT: My silence, by the way, isn't accepting everything you said but rather than -- the record is clear that he didn't have a right to be upset by that and to react the way he did, but I'll get to

that shortly.

MR. FITZGERALD: I don't know whether he has a right to or not, your Honor; but if you're asking for a response, you're asking for an explanation that I think you're entitled to, I think he has --

THE COURT: If it's based in reality and not based on fraud.

MR. FITZGERALD: Well, there's a difference -- what Mr. Fall believes is different from what the Government believes. Okay.

And I'd point out, you know, another part of this is the -- when the Government actually -- when the IRS actually got to the point of wanting to sit down with Mr. Fall in an audit or in person and act personally with him, it wasn't about whether or not he would pay. It was about how much and when. Okay.

So you never get to have that meeting with the IRS about whether or not the deduction is appropriate. It's we've already decided, you need to pay and when are you going to pay us. Okay.

So you can say that Mr. Fall doesn't have a right to be upset, but he was upset. Okay. He actually was upset. And to say that he can't be upset and the Government saying he can't be upset, I think that's arrogance.

The Government says that one of the things he testified to, being targeted by the IRS, is false, just plain false. Well, I think that that response is just plain false because you remember, your Honor, the very first witness we had from the frivolous tax unit, okay, they have a list. They have people that they label and stick in the frivolous tax unit, and Mr. Fall was one.

Whether you call it targeting or labeling or identifying, I don't care. He was targeted. He was labeled. The IRS had him on the radar. Okay.

He felt he was targeted. So him saying that he was targeted is not a falsehood. That's not perjury. It's his perception of what's going on and somewhat founded.

In the memo, during the trial, in the argument, you know, the continued tax dodger, tax defier, sovereign citizen, all these things, labeling, labeling; and then they're going to say he actually wasn't targeted at all.

I'm not saying he didn't have a chance to maybe change some things, but he has been targeted and he has been labeled and he has been treated a particular way.

Your Honor, the perjury accusations, okay, and this again is not just something that Mr. Kane and Mr. Bender I think suffer from with the Government, but

perjury is not when the Government doesn't believe you.

That's not perjury. Just because the Government

doesn't believe what you say is not perjury.

Perjury by the statute, okay, 18 U.S.C. 1621, is when the witness says something under oath, okay, knowing or believing that it's not true. He says it as true, but he believes in his mind it's not true when he says it on the stand. That's perjury, and that's different than not believing or disbelief by the Government.

Most of what they've argued as perjury is just disagreement or disbelief on the Government's part.

They said in the sentencing memo that Mr. Fall committed a felony by committing perjury on the stand during his stunted testimony.

I think that was somewhat ironic, your Honor, I think I'm using that correctly, because one of the things that Mr. Fall had said that the Government's complaining about is he said that an IRS officer had done something wrong and what the IRS officer had done was a felony. His belief, okay, is not perjury.

I'll give you a better example of what could be perjury, though, or closer to what perjury is, and that is what Carmen Sanchez did in this courtroom. All right.

If you remember, your Honor, Friday afternoon the first week of the trial Ms. Sanchez was testifying --

THE COURT: Dr. Sanchez.

MR. FITZGERALD: Dr. Sanchez. Excuse me.

Dr. Sanchez was testifying, and I kept asking her about those checks that she signed and whether or not she knew that they were going to false expenses. I think if we actually pull up the transcript, you'll see she never actually answered that question.

On Friday afternoon she got really tearful about it. She kept saying over and over that, Well, you know, I trusted my husband, I trusted my husband, he's my husband so I should trust him.

On Monday morning I asked her the same series of questions. Same answers. She wasn't crying or starting to cry on Monday morning. Same answers.

Well, your Honor, when Dr. Sanchez testified at the grand jury, the same questions were put to her by the Government, and she did the same thing. She didn't say, Yes, I knew they were false checks, or, No, I didn't know they were false checks. She went on this rambling thing about I trusted my husband.

Now, Dr. Sanchez is not, regardless of how she testified, she's not meek, she's not stupid, she knows

exactly what she was testifying or signing. That is a closer example in my mind to perjury than what Mr. Fall did.

And, you know, if it was just her answering me, it would be one thing --

THE COURT: Whether one or two people committed perjury, Mr. Fitzgerald, in the courtroom isn't for me to determine at this point. As I told you before, I'm not making a determination on perjury.

Clearly, I'm not making a determination on whether or not Dr. Sanchez committed perjury, but I told you earlier in the discussion that I will leave that to others or not to make that determination, but --

MR. FITZGERALD: That's fine, your Honor.

THE COURT: That's a legal finding after due process and a trial, a determination of whether someone committed perjury or not. I don't have that here. I'm not considering perjury as part of any analysis in the sentencing.

MR. FITZGERALD: That's fine. That's their argument that he should get part of the sentence because of committing perjury.

Your Honor, the Government talking about guiding other people into violating the law, dragging other

people along to commit these tax crimes. The first is the allegations about him bringing his wife into this, bringing Dr. Sanchez into this, convincing her to break the law. Okay. He's been convicted of that, so that's not an aggravating factor. That is the case. That's the first part.

The second thing is that the Government included in their sentencing memo as exhibits statements from two people, a Mr. Pappagano or Papagno (phonetic) and a Ms. Allen; and I'd suggest that each one of those statements about Mr. Fall trying to get them to do things is really not credible, shouldn't be taken with any kind of credibility, and here's why.

Mr. Papagno, as far as I could tell in the limited time that I had to research him, seems to be in the crosshairs of the IRS already, okay, and for as far as I could tell for his own doing, not necessarily Mr. Fall telling him to do something; but in any event, his statements are certainly clouded or muddied up by his own legal problems.

Ms. Allen, on the other hand, is in between pleading guilty and her sentencing right now, and I think the date on her statement was last week, okay; and her plea agreement is that she pleads guilty to one count, and I can't remember if it was just filing a

false tax return or aiding and abetting or something, they would dismiss the other four or five counts of false statements. That's part of her plea agreement.

The other part of her plea agreement is that she cooperate with the Government against any and all that she can provide information about.

Now, she pled guilty prior to Mr. Fall's trial, so presumably the Government already knew that Ms. Allen -- the allegations that Ms. Allen was making against Mr. Fall back then, but we're just hearing about it a week -- within the last week.

Clearly Ms. Allen's statements about Mr. Fall getting her to commit illegal acts are biased based on her own criminal liability, and she's in jeopardy.

She's facing sentencing here shortly.

All right. Your Honor, I apologized I was going to be rambling around a bit at the beginning. I just want to end with this. When we talk about the purposes of sentencing under 3553(a), one of them is not uniformity in sentencing. Uniformity comes from the Sentencing Reform Act that created the guidelines.

The guidelines are about uniformity. The guidelines categorize everybody by criminal history and crime, the new crime. That's it. Those two factors.

That's how they create uniformity.

Sentencing and 3553(a) is about sentencing the single individual here, Mr. Fall. Whether his sentence is uniform with other people or not is not 3553(a)'s aim. He's sentenced as an individual.

Deterrence and respect for the law, that's what the Government is hanging their hat on for the 51-month recommendation here. Okay. That number is based on the guidelines. All right.

There's nothing to say that 51 months or 41 months or anywhere in between under the guidelines is going to be a better deterrent than a sentence that's shorter.

There's nothing to say it's going to promote more respect for the law, 41 to 51 months or a sentence that's shorter. As I said before, he's not a danger to the community.

The Government's asked for a supervised release condition that he cooperate with the IRS and eventually pay back taxes and satisfy fines and everything. Well, he certainly can't do that if he's locked up, if he's not going to have any money to do that. So that is a purpose of sentencing; that if we want him to pay back this money, he needs to be out, not in, jail.

Your Honor, and common sense should say, I think it is, that the only reason for prison for Mr. Fall is

simply to punish him because it's not going to, in fact, create any deterrence. It's not going to change Mr. Fall's attitude towards law, or I shouldn't say attitude, his understanding of what the law is and what the authority is.

Your Honor, I'm asking for probation because he's a first-time offender and he's not convicted of a serious crime, of a violent crime, he's not a danger to the community, and the Government ultimately wants to be repaid and made whole.

There is one last thing, your Honor. The second supervised release condition the Government asks for, I'm going to object to that because effectively Mr. Fall could file something and after he's done that, according to the way that the condition's written, he could be told that it's frivolous.

So that's not the way the conditions are supposed to work. You're supposed to know exactly what it is that's wrong before you do it.

So I understand what the Government's trying to do there; but that condition is, I guess I would say, unconstitutional because he's going to be punished for something after he does it. He's not being told what's not allowed ahead of time, your Honor. So thank you.

MR. KANE: May I on one issue?

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this short.

THE COURT: I'm all set, Mr. Kane. Thank you. Mr. Fall, do you wish to address the Court before I impose sentence? THE DEFENDANT: Sir, as I've stated --THE COURT: Mr. Fall, simple question. Do you wish to address the Court before I impose sentence? THE DEFENDANT: I wish to make my allocution. THE COURT: And you have a right to do it, and I'm going to afford you that right; but you need to be by a microphone because the recordings don't pick it up and the stenographer can't take it down. THE DEFENDANT: Okav. THE COURT: You have a right to allocute. going to afford you that right to allocute, but you need to be by the microphone.

THE DEFENDANT: Okay. I'm just going to keep

THE COURT: No, but you still need to be by the microphone.

> THE DEFENDANT: That's okay. I understand.

Unless that accuser shows up, the Plaintiff shows up and testifies, this case is fraud. It's void. I've given you notice that I've tendered a certified copy of the live birth certificate, promissory note, the jury verdict form, which is not signed, does not

bear the Court seal, all accepted with value, all of my 1 2 original signature. And also I want to remind you --3 THE COURT: Mr. Fall, do you wish --Sir, I want to remind you that 4 THE DEFENDANT: 5 if the U.S. Marshals touch me and there's no sworn 6 accusation on the record, as you know there isn't, only I have an accusation on the record sworn, no verifiable 7 8 claim on the record, you know all this, sir --9 MR. FITZGERALD: John, it needs to be recorded. 10 THE DEFENDANT: It can hear me fine. I have a 11 very good voice. 12 THE COURT: Mr. Fall, do you wish to allocute --13 THE DEFENDANT: Then that is fraud, sir, and 14 it's a felonious act, and I'm sure you don't want a 15 felonious act happening by way of your case. 16 THE COURT: Vickie, give Mr. Fall a microphone, 17 please. 18 THE DEFENDANT: It doesn't matter to me if it's 19 in the transcript. I have witnesses here. 20 THE COURT: The deputy clerk is going to hand 21 Mr. Fall a microphone so he can be afforded his 22 opportunity to allocute. 23 THE DEFENDANT: I feel important now. So let's 24 start with the basics, and I'm going to put all of this

under affirmation so the stenographer has this.

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Everything I say from now on is under affirmation.

I have done no wrong. There's been no act of Congress before this Court. That's absolutely insane. What law are they talking about?

There is no act of law. There is no act of Congress before this case. There's no accuser. I am neither the accused nor the Defendant. I have no attorney. I've had no representation in this case because the nature of the charges have been concealed at all times. It's absolutely impossible to obtain counsel unless the nature of the charges are made known.

It's very simple. So if the accuser doesn't get on that witness stand right now and the Plaintiff with face, then this case is fraud and it's void.

The record shows proof that I am a man, John Joseph Fall, and I'm a private citizen, not a public citizen. And I'm without titles nor surety, and I am the sole grantor and beneficiary in the private trust John J. Fall, and I'm not the trustee. I believe Mr. McKane (sic) is the trustee.

This case damages that interest and my property, yet there is no act of Congress before the Court as I have said. And I'm not represented by an attorney. I've never been represented by an attorney.

The Defendant is a fiction. And since there is no sworn accusation on the record against either me or said trust and no lawful jury verdict, as the jury verdict form clearly shows, I wish and require you to confirm to all the U.S. Marshals here that I have filed a claim for \$1 million if they touch me or trespass against me in any way.

I verify that all the documents I placed on the record are the truth, and they're unrebutted. I am the only one with a sworn accusation on the record. There is no other accusation.

I've placed on the record proof that John J.

Fall is a trust, a private trust. I've also placed on the record proof that, none of which has been disputed, that I am a man and a private citizen. I'm not a U.S. citizen. I'm not a surety to the public.

Sir, I require you to take notice that I have presented the prosecutors this morning with certified copies of both the jury verdict form and the certificate of live birth, both accepted for value in exclusive equity with my original signatures, plus seven certified money notes with my original signatures, all presented with intent to discharge and abate the matter without admitting to any wrongdoing. I simply want my property free.

I declare this matter as now discharged and abated without further effect.

THE COURT: Thank you, Mr. Fall.

Mr. Fall, I have one question for you that I didn't ask earlier. Did you --

THE DEFENDANT: Sir, is there an order that requires the man, John Joseph Fall, the private citizen, to be here?

THE COURT: Yes.

THE DEFENDANT: May I see that order bearing a clerk's seal and the clerk's signature because you're putting these men in harm's way if you don't show that order.

THE COURT: Mr. Fall, I'm issuing an order consistent with the Court's prior order that you attend all hearings of this Court. This is a sentencing procedure. You're required to be here.

THE DEFENDANT: Then I require you to show the marshals that order.

THE COURT: If you attempt to leave the courtroom at this time, I'm instructing and ordering the marshals to take you into custody.

THE DEFENDANT: I require you to show that order, sir, that specifically names the man, John Joseph Fall, six foot one, blue eyes, not the fiction

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John J. Fall.

THE COURT: Mr. Fall, have you had a chance to review the presentence report? I didn't ask you that earlier. Did you get a copy of the presentence report?

THE DEFENDANT: Sir, you well know by my sworn testimony on the record I cannot read, I do not comprehend legalese.

THE COURT: So you're not answering the question as to whether you received it?

THE DEFENDANT: There's sworn testimony on the record that's not been rebutted.

THE COURT: This Court has reviewed the many filings that have taken place in this case. The Court has considered the facts that came out at trial during this case having sat through it. The Court has considered the filings during sentencing of the Government and the arguments of both counsel for the Government and for Mr. Fall as well as the allocution made by Mr. Fall this morning.

And I find that the nature and circumstances of the offense are such that Mr. Fall not just failed to pay taxes for over a decade but took affirmative and evasive tactics to avoid tax liability.

It involved an intricate and a sophisticated system of fraud spanning this country and spanning

almost over a decade, and it involved many others.

You used dummy corporations and companies, fraudulent accounts, fake names to accomplish the goal of obstructing in this case.

THE DEFENDANT: Sir, where is the sworn testimony that says that?

THE COURT: These actions by you show your history and characteristics of intricate deception and a long history of illegal behavior.

In order to reflect the seriousness of the offense and promote respect for the law and consistent with the 3553 factors that this Court has and does consider and to punish you for your conduct, a serious jail sentence is required.

The guideline recommendation --

THE DEFENDANT: I'm not accepting any jail sentence, nor fines, nor taxes.

THE COURT: The guideline range of 41 to -- the guideline range is 41 to 51 months; but this Court believes that a 30-month sentence, two-and-a-half years, is sufficient but not greater than necessary to comply with all of the purposes of sentencing.

And, therefore, Mr. Fall, I sentence you to a period of incarceration of 30 months in the custody of the Bureau of Prisons.

In addition to the 30 months, the Court imposes as to Counts I, III and IV a period of one year of supervised release; as to Count II, a period of three years of supervised release, all to run concurrently.

You shall cooperate -- as a special condition, in addition to the standard conditions of supervised release, you shall cooperate with the Internal Revenue Service and file all outstanding tax returns and pay all outstanding taxes, interest and penalties.

The Court finds that a fine is not appropriate but the Court imposes the \$400 mandatory special assessment.

Anything further from Probation?

THE PROBATION OFFICER: Nothing further, your Honor.

THE COURT: Mr. Fall, the Court hereby notifies you that you have a right to appeal this sentence.

THE DEFENDANT: Sir, I'm not the person,
Mr. Fall. Please stop referring to me that way.

THE COURT: If you can't afford the cost of an appeal --

THE DEFENDANT: I'm John Joseph Fall. I have sworn testimony on the record what my name is.

THE COURT: If you can't afford the cost of an appeal, you may move to proceed in forma pauperis. If

you can't afford counsel for an appeal, one will be appointed for you. You are also notified that the Clerk of Court will file an appeal on your behalf if requested to do so by you.

THE DEFENDANT: No one has permission to file anything on my behalf.

THE COURT: Any appeal from the sentence must be filed within 14 days of entry of the judgment on the docket. Mr. Fall, do you understand these appellate rights?

THE DEFENDANT: You have my testimony on the record, sworn and unrebutted.

THE COURT: Mr. Kane, anything --

THE DEFENDANT: There's nothing to understand.

I'm the only one with sworn accusations on the record.

This case is entirely fraud.

THE COURT: Mr. Kane, anything further for the Government?

MR. KANE: Two things, your Honor. The Government moves to revoke bail. We don't think this is an appropriate case for voluntary surrender given the living circumstances, the inconsistent living circumstances, the fact that he doesn't have a job, his use of aliases, the nature of the conduct that he committed for which he was convicted, his conduct here

today once again showing disrespect for the Court.

THE DEFENDANT: I mean no disrespect, sir.

MR. KANE: His talking over the Court when the Court is trying to issue its orders. For multiple reasons, he's not an appropriate case for voluntary surrender. So that's point number one.

Point number two, I'd note that the Court did not impose the special conditions that we requested as to frivolous filings, and I think I can understand where the Court might be coming from there; but we would ask the Court perhaps to issue an order that would have a magistrate judge review all future filings from this Defendant and make a determination whether they were or are false and frivolous and not enter them into Pacer and become public records.

I think this may have been done in another case by Judge Lisi. We can look into that and submit something to the Court.

THE COURT: Mr. Kane, I'm not going to impose that condition. I think the system works itself out even with potentially frivolous filings. If there's material that you believe once it's filed it should be stricken, then an appropriate motion, or anyone, an appropriate motion should be made.

I can understand your frustration, but I think

we need to let the system play out in that regard.

Mr. Fitzgerald, any position on revocation of bail?

MR. FITZGERALD: Yes, your Honor. Despite all of the arguments about him being disrespectful of the Court and talking over the Court and everything else in court, he has always showed up for court on time, where he's supposed to be, when he's supposed to be there and can be certainly depended on to do that and report to Bureau of Prisons when the Court orders him to do that.

THE COURT: Mr. Fitzgerald, I agree with you that that has been the case. That's why I granted him bail at your request a couple of weeks ago. However, this is a different situation.

I'm going to remand immediately the Defendant into the custody of the U.S. Marshals. My concern is his continued failure this morning as well knowing this was pressing to even acknowledge who he is, and I fear his -- if he carries that issue forward that he wouldn't otherwise report in light of the sentence that was imposed. So I'm going to remand him to the custody of the U.S. Marshals.

THE DEFENDANT: They better make sure that there's a Court order, sir, signed with a court seal on it.

THE COURT: We'll stand adjourned. (Adjourned.) CERTIFICATION I, Karen M. Wischnowsky, RPR-RMR-CRR, do hereby certify that the foregoing pages are a true and accurate transcription of my stenographic notes in the above-entitled case. February 16, 2016\_\_\_\_ Date <u>/s/ Karen M. Wischnowsky</u> Karen M. Wischnowsky, RPR-RMR-CRR Federal Official Court Reporter